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Worldwide Report

LAW OF THE SEA

No. 205

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CONTENTS

ASIA

AUSTRALIA

Shell Oil Exploration Program Begun in Bass Strait (Anton Whitehead; THE AUSTRALIAN, 3 Jun 82).....	1
Gas Discoveries Reported at North Scott Reef, Barrow Wells (THE AUSTRALIAN, 9 Jun 82, THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, 9 Jun 82).....	3
Scott Reef Find, by Bruce Jacques West Barrow Tests	
Briefs Taiwan Clam Boat Seized	5

INDIA

Newsmen Brief on Deep Sea Fishing Conference (PATRIOT, 26 Jun 82).....	6
Claim for Mining Rights in Seabed Plots (BUSINESS TIMES, 19 Jun 82).....	7
Briefs Kerala Offshore Minerals	8

NEW ZEALAND

Briefs Japan Seeks More Bluefin Tuna	9
---	---

LATIN AMERICA

ARGENTINA

Briefs

Krill Project With USSR

10

WEST EUROPE

ICELAND

Iceland's Future Agenda for Sea Law Issues Discussed

(Eyjolfur Konrad Jonsson; MORGUNBLADID, 29 May 82).....

11

SHELL OIL EXPLORATION PROGRAM BEGUN IN BASS STRAIT

Canberra THE AUSTRALIAN in English 3 Jun 82 p 7

[Article by Anton Whitehead]

[Text]

SHELL Oil of Australia has embarked on a risky exploration program which could provide the biggest rewards since the initial finds were made in Bass Strait in the late 1960s.

The drilling program is searching previously unexplored regions in Bass Strait where geologists believe structures exist with the potential to hold up to 200 million barrels of oil.

Discoveries of this size would easily overshadow the bevy of smaller onshore finds in recent years and would compare favorably with Esso-BHP's smaller producing fields.

Structures similar in size to Tuna, with 69 million barrels of recoverable oil, Flounder 63 million, West Kingfish 110 million, and Portescue 280 million could be found but no hopes are held for a second Kingfish which held 1100 million when discovered in July 1967.

Shell's first well in its exploration program is the Hammerhead No 1 wildcat well in exploration Permit Vic P19.

Shell, together with News Corporation, TNT, Crusader Oil, and Mincorp, won the permit in last year's round of tenders after Esso-BHP released the areas.

Esso-BHP released three permits and the others will be drilled by consortiums headed by Australian Aquitaine and Phillips.

Hammerhead is the first in the renewed hunt and the results will go far in determining Shell's prospects and future exploration strategy in Bass Strait.

Hammerhead is situated on the south side of the Rosedale fault which runs parallel to the Victorian coast and through the middle of the permit area.

The Rosedale fault is regarded as the northern boundary of the Gippsland rift (that is, the basin proper) and Shell hopes that oil has migrated to the basin's edge and accumulated in a fault trap.

The south side of the Rosedale fault is an unexplored region and Shell geologists have extrapolated knowledge from the adjacent Tuna and Mackeral fields in assessing the region's prospectivity.

The permit area to the north of the Rosedale fault is not regarded as prospective as previous exploration (by Shell-Faso in the early 1970s and by Hudebay last year) proved largely unsuccessful.

Although the region does contain hydrocarbons and quantities of gas have already been found Shell believes the probability of a large oil trap north of the Rosedale fault is slight.

But the existence of hydrocarbons in the northern region is encouraging as oil might have migrated from the north to fault traps now being explored by Shell.

It is clear that Shell is keen to explore the big high risk plays where the rewards, if successful, will be great.

"Hammerhead has the potential to hold 200 million barrels but it is a very risky prospect," a Shell rig geologist said.

"But it needs to be explored for our understanding of Gippsland and could throw up quite a lot of surprises."

In a recent visit to the Diamond M Epoch rig which is drilling the Hammerhead well Shell geologists said they were confident about the existence of a fault trap structure in which oil could accumulate but were understandably cautious in relation to possible reserves due to two significant uncertainties.

Sand quality and ability of oil to migrate from the trap remain unknown.

The intra-Latrobe sands which flowed oil from Tuna and Flounder have been pinpointed as the main target zone at Hammerhead and have traditionally been of good quality.

But the sands could have been contaminated with a conglomerate of irregular

sand, shale, mud, and rock when the Rosedale fault occurred.

Sand quality is directly related to the percentage of oil which is recoverable. The recovery rate in Latrobe sand has been as high as 70 per cent but would deteriorate quickly if "dirty".

The second uncertainty relates to the shale seal which should restrict oil migration but cannot be checked until the target is tested.

More is known about the south-western part of the permit which Shell regards as more prospective although situated in deeper water.

The south west would have been the first area drilled but for the lack of an appropriate rig.

The first well in the area, Votadore No 1, will be spudded in December when a French-owned rig, Nymphaea, now being built in Japan arrives.

Shell geologists have pinpointed both the highly successful upper Latrobe sands and the intra-Latrobe sands as target zones.

Shell has not completely written off formations below the Latrobe sands.

GAS DISCOVERIES REPORTED AT NORTH SCOTT REEF, BARROW WELLS

Scott Reef Find

Canberra THE AUSTRALIAN in English 9 Jun 82 p 24

[Article by Bruce Jacques]

[Text]

WOODSIDE Petroleum has confirmed what appears to be a major gas discovery with the North Scott Reef No 1 well, off the northern Western Australian coast.

The company, on behalf of the North West Shelf partners, told stock exchanges yesterday the first production test on the well over the interval 4223m to 4283m had flowed gas at the rate of about 1.63 million cu m a day.

The flow was during the initial clean up period through a 25mm choke at a wellhead pressure of 2100 psi.

It is one of the largest recorded in Australia and suggests a gas field of major proportions.

But with the partners already experiencing difficulty selling gas from the huge North West Shelf project, any development of North Scott Reef is some years away.

The well was actually the third by the consortium on the Scott Reef structure, more than 1000km to the north of the main North West Shelf

gas field.

This distance means that North Scott Reef would be a totally separate development to the North West Shelf, suggesting a virtual repetition of the Shelf's huge development costs.

The North Scott Reef structure was first drilled in the early 1970s and produced moderate gas flows, but technical problems had until recently prevented proper testing.

Woodside has a 50 per cent interest in the well with the other partners being BP, Cal Asiatic, Shell and BHP.

Meanwhile, Pancontinental Petroleum has recovered only gas cut water from a second drill stem test on the West Walker No 1 well.

A second drill stem test over the interval 1415m to 1463m in the well, only about 16km east-south-east of the Mereenie oil field, had recovered 896m of gas cut water.

In other drilling developments, partners in the West Barrow 1A well, off WA, are preparing to test an indicated hydrocarbon-bearing section.

West Barrow Tests

Sydney THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD in English 9 Jun 82 p 27

[Excerpt]

Two offshore West Australian wells yesterday indicated significant additions to natural gas resources in the area.

The West Barrow 1a well being drilled by the Glomar Grand Isle in the Barrow sub-basin about 40 kilometres west of Barrow Island is to undergo flow tests during the next week after electric logs run over the interval 3,356-3,500 metres indicated net sands of 107 metres to be hydrocarbon bearing.

A spokesman for the operator, Offshore Oil NL, said yesterday: "We know there is a hydrocarbon column. The composition and size can only be determined by testing."

West Barrow 1a, which has been a difficult well to drill and test, is the site of West Barrow 1, which target. It is 38 metres away from the site of West Barrow 1 which was spudded on February 18 and plugged and abandoned four days later due to technical problems.

CSO: 5200/7546

AUSTRALIA

BRIEFS

TAIWAN CLAM BOAT SEIZED--An Australian navy patrol boat, the (Wallamboo), has intercepted a Taiwanese clam boat off the northeastern coast near Mackay. It's the fourth Taiwanese vessel apprehended by Australian authorities over the past 12 months. The patrol boat intercepted the latest vessel--the (Rua Chishiang) No 3--28 nautical miles southwest of Frederick Reef. Radio Australia's Brisbane office says the Taiwanese vessel is expected to arrive in the Port of Cairns later this week. [Text] [BK131451 Melbourne Overseas Service in English 1130 GMT 12 Jul 82]

CSO: 5200/5671

NEWSMEN BRIEF ON DEEP SEA FISHING CONFERENCE

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 26 Jun 82 p 8

[Text] **A** THREE-DAY international conference on deep sea fishing ended in the Capital on Friday urging the Government to recognise exploitation of the ocean as a national priority and play a pioneering role in developing the industry.

The conference, organised by the Association of Indian Fishery Industries, recommended the setting up of a separate department at the Centre to look after the development of marine resources.

Briefing newsmen, association president N P Singh said the conference was of the view that India must immediately take up tuna fishing operation utilising the experience of Philippines or France. He said Indian waters provided a tuna resource of over one lakh tonnes which would fetch \$ 1 million. There was no need to waste time on surveys and feasibility studies.

Mr Singh said tuna fishing was of pressing importance in view of the declining resources of shrimp fishery and the need for diversifying Indian fishing. The conference recommended that the Government adopt a liberal approach in allowing joint ventures with any country and in the use of any type of vessel, equipment and techniques or personnel.

Mr Singh said the Government's approach to the deep sea fishing industry was not favourable.

He said the Government had been delaying permission to private parties for chartering foreign vessels to study how the other countries were doing well in deep sea fishing. Deep sea fishing in India at present was confined to shrimps and most of the business houses were pulling out as it was a losing proposition.

Mr Singh said 13 parties had been allowed to charter foreign vessels and all of them except two State Governments were new to fishing.

Business houses who had been in deep sea fishing for several years have not been given permission. 'File is pending at the highest level', is the usual answer, Mr Singh said.

Earlier, addressing the concluding session, Minister of State for Agriculture, R V Swaminathan said the Government would be willing to consider certain additional incentives, subsidies and concessions if concrete proposals fully supported by facts, for exploitation and utilisation of tuna, squids and cuttle fishes were made.

He said the Government had an open mind in following up the useful recommendations that the conference might bring forth.

He hoped the deliberations and discussions that the members of the Government and industry

had would spur activity to develop deep sea fishing in an organised, methodical, scientific and pragmatic way.

This would help in the fishing fleet not only serving its basic function of exploiting optimally the annually renewable fish stock, earn foreign exchange and effectively deter poaching but also serve as the second line of defence, Mr Swaminathan said.

CLAIM FOR MINING RIGHTS IN SEABED PLOTS

Kuala Lumpur BUSINESS TIMES in English 19 Jun 82 p 5

[Text]

NEW DELHI, June 18

INDIA has decided to seek exclusive seabed mining rights to two Indian Ocean plots of 100,000 sq km (60,000 sq miles) each.

A Department of Ocean Development spokesman briefing reporters in Panjim, capital of Goa Federal Territory, said on Wednesday that India's claim will be placed before the UN preparatory committee on the Law of the Sea before the committee's Dec. 31 deadline.

The spokesman said India will ask for exclusive mining rights in the two seabed plots located 10 degrees south of the Equator in the central Indian Ocean, but only one of the two plots will be leased to India.

India is the only developing country with a

seabed mining programme and the only nation known to be exploring the Indian Ocean.

The Indian Ocean seabed is believed to hold 100 million tons of polymetallic nodules which can provide manganese, nickel, copper and other metals, the Indian official said.

India embarked on an Indian Ocean seabed survey last year, when its research ship "Gangesini" scooped up nodules later found to contain manganese, nickel, copper and other metals.

The Indian spokesman said the government is planning to obtain a bathyscaph that can take surveyors to the ocean bottom. A Swiss bathyscaph expert is now in New Delhi for talks with Indian officials. — UPI

CSO: 5200/8212

BRIEFS

KERALA OFFSHORE MINERALS--Calicut, June 25 (UN): The Geological Survey of India (GSI) will undertake detailed explorations for offshore gold in northern Kerala soon after the current monsoon. This will be the first attempt to tap offshore gold in the country. GSI has ordered a sophisticated drill ship from Holland for the job, a GSI spokesman told UNI. Existence of gold in Kerala's coastal waters, particularly in the river mouth sediments of the Malabar region, is a recent discovery. Fairly large deposits of gold are known to exist in the Wayanad and Nilambur forest areas in the western ghat in north Kerala. Recent GSI surveys revealed small traces of gold all along the course of rivers originating from the two areas. This led to the theory that the Malabar rivers might have been carrying onshore gold to the sea over the years. Subsequent river sediment samples have confirmed it. To begin with, GSI will drill off the river mouth of Beypore, 8 km. south of Calicut. The survey will give a definite idea of the extent of offshore gold and the economic viability of the project. GSI also has plans to drill the Godavari river mouth in Andhra Pradesh and the Subarna Rekha river in Orissa, a GSI spokesman said. He said that in the olden times certain rivers were known sources of gold to gold hunters. He added that GSI has plans to carry out systematic surveys of north Kerala's offshore areas for rare minerals, nickel and platinum. GSI has recently set up a marine survey unit in Mangalore for this purpose. [Text] [Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 26 Jun 82 p 11]

CSO: 3200/7047

NEW ZEALAND

BRIEFS

JAPAN SEEKS MORE BLUEFIN TUNA--A Japanese fishing delegation has discussed southern bluefin tuna and squid quotas for 1983 with representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. The eight-man delegation was led by Mr T. Noda and included industry representatives. "The Japanese were hoping the tuna boat licence fee of \$27,000 would be reduced and wanted more tuna long liners in New Zealand waters," said the assistant director of fisheries research division, Dr Robin Allen. "But the Government is concerned that the southern bluefin tuna stock is over-exploited and wants to keep the fishing effort the same. "We are also keen to develop an international agreement regarding the management of the fishery," Dr Allen said. The Japanese also asked that the 13,000-tonne quota for trawl-caught squid not be reduced. Representatives from the ministry's fisheries divisions will inform the Government of the Japanese requests. A decision regarding quotas will be made after that. [Text] [Wellington THE EVENING POST in English 30 Jun 82 p 2]

CSO: 5200/9100

ARGENTINA

BRIEFS

KRILL PROJECT WITH USSR--Buenos Aires, 24 Jul (AFP)--Argentina will begin to exploit krill, a vitamin-rich crustacean, in agreement with the Soviet Union, an official source revealed today. Rear Adm Ciro Garcia, the secretary of state for maritime interests, has said that the initiative has already been taken. He said: We have an agreement and we are truly determined to undertake that project with that country. He added that immediate results will be achieved because Soviet ships, whose crew will be partially made up of Argentina men, will participate in the project. He said the ships will operate from Ushuaia and that construction of (infrastructure) facilities in the southern part of the country will start in 1 or 2 years. He noted, however, that the catch of krill can really begin immediately [pero la pesca es realmente inmediata]. [Text] PY262114 Paris AFP in Spanish 2201 GMT 24 Jul 82]

CSO: 5200/2104

ICELAND'S FUTURE AGENDA FOR SEA LAW ISSUES DISCUSSED

Reykjavik MORGUNBLADID in Icelandic 29 May 82 pp 18-19

[Speech by Eyjolfur Konrad Jonsson: "The Next Steps in Iceland's Law of the Sea"]

[Text] Eyjolfur Konrad Jonsson [Independence Party MP] gave the following speech at a meeting of the Rotary Club of Reykjavik on 26 May.

Both I and others have criticized a whole handball team or even a whole soccer team being sent from here to attend the meetings of the Third UN Conference on the Law of the Sea. Somehow, this criticism has neither affected us, the representatives, nor has it become general, although deep down people have realized that much was at stake and the future interests of the nation were being decided at this conference. Although we sometimes did not have much work to do, there were times when it was nice to be able to confer and take a united position which everybody knew was the view of the nation as a whole.

In general, internal disputes, disputes which might have turned out to be fateful, were successfully avoided. Even though people realized deep down the importance of the international law established at the meetings of the Law of the Sea Conference, I doubt whether all yet realize fully the enormous result and how quickly victories have been won.

A few reminders might perhaps help us reflect back to the past. Let's think about the Second UN Law of the Sea Conference which was held in 1960. It was only a matter of one vote that prevented the 12-mile fishing zone becoming international law with the stipulation, however, that states which, over the previous 5 years, had carried on fishing in an area from 6 to 12 miles [from another country's shoreline] would maintain their fishing rights for the next 10 years. This proposal was made by Canada and the United States. The Icelanders introduced an amendment in the General Assembly to the effect that exceptions would not apply to those states whose livelihood was chiefly based on coastal fishing. This turned out to be the exemplary proposal--always referred to as the "Icelandic provision"--which since then has been referred to in all international cooperation regarding law of the sea and now serves as Article 71 in the Law of the Sea Treaty which was ratified 30 April. Our amendment proposal did not pass, which I think turned out in our favor as it

resulted in Iceland voting against the main proposal which was defeated by one vote as mentioned before. Now, obviously nobody knows how international law would have developed if the 12-mile limit had been ratified as international law more than 20 years ago, but most likely there would have been different and slower progress.

Let us next look at the fall of 1973 when Icelanders for the first time saw the 200-mile zone pictured on the television screen. That was on the first anniversary of the 50-mile fisheries extension. Much fun was made of the "isolation of the editor of the MORGUNBLADID." It was said that the 200-mile limit would "end up in the Greenland glacier." People said that the 50-mile limit was "today's task" and the 200-mile limit was for some time in the future, after a law of the sea conference. At least 10 to 12 years would pass before we would achieve such results; that was how that "process" worked, and so on and on. Only 2 years later the 200-mile zone had become reality.

Almost 3 years ago, 18 July 1978, I delivered a speech to this worthy organization in which I pointed out the arguments Icelanders should use in order to insure their rights in the Jan Mayen area. I must admit that I felt that some people, anyway, thought that was going too far and I heard the word "imperialism" spoken in the audience. One year later we had secured extremely important rights in this area, both with regard to fishery conservation and seabed rights. At the same time, a new international regulation was established, a regulation that is likely to have positive effect in many places in the world when it comes to joint exploitation and joint permanent sovereignty of nations over the resources of the seabed. This was the first time that such an agreement was made on the basis of the UN Treaty on the Law of the Sea, although such a solution is in fact nowhere mentioned directly in the treaty that has now been ratified. The whole nuance of the treaty, however, implies that the nations should endeavor to reach an agreement, and as a result there was nothing there that prevented a sensible solution of our disputes with the Norwegians.

Some people might say that we can be pleased with what we have got already. But our struggle is far from over.

I feel that based on Article 76 in the Law of the Sea Treaty, Iceland has extremely important and hitherto unclaimed rights to the seabed, rights that should immediately be secured on the basis of parliamentary resolutions. On the one hand, there is the right to the seabed extending 350 miles to Reykjanes Ridge, and, on the other hand, our right to the Rockall Plateau and the Hatton Bank. In my article in MORGUNBLADID on 12 March of this year I put down the main arguments presented by the Icelanders in their demand for a share and interests in the Rockall area as follows:

"We Icelanders present many arguments for our rights to the Rockall Plateau. Some of these arguments are listed below:

"1. The sense of the Law of the Sea Conference and the Law of the Sea Treaty is that justice should prevail and it must be considered just that we have some share in these rights if Ireland gets rights. Our approach to the issue must also be considered just.

- "2. For 100 million years the same geological activities have characterized the geological history of the Rockall Plateau, Iceland and the Faroe Islands.
- "3. Iceland is connected to the Hatton Bank directly after the Iceland-Faroe Ridge, but this ridge is a natural prolongation of Iceland.
- "4. The Iceland-Faroe Ridge is a special type of ocean crust which is called 'Icelandic type crust.'
- "5. The sea depth in the span from Iceland to the Hatton Bank is nowhere more than 2,500 meters which is the base of reference referred to in Article 76. Considerable deposits formed from discharge from Icelandic rivers are to be found along the Hatton Bank all the way south to the Bay of Biscay.
- "6. If an equidistant line were the deciding factor, almost all of the Hatton Bank would be within Icelandic territory.
- "7. Land-formed deposits have been found in a nodule at 1,300 meters depth in the Iceland-Faroe Ridge area.
- "8. The geological history of the Icelandic area from Greenland, Jan Mayen and the Faroe and Rockall areas is unique.
- "9. The term 'natural prolongation' has not been defined in any definite way so that each decision must be based on the specific case. There are countless variations in the oceans of the world.
- "10. But the rule that was established with the Jan Mayen agreement should be the guiding light for solution of disputes that arise between these four neighboring countries.
- "11. If an agreement is not reached by the nations which claim the area, the result might be that nobody would get anything and the area declared 'international.'"

We representatives of the political parties to the last Law of the Sea Conference have agreed to send the foreign minister the following memo regarding our next steps in this matter:

Memo to the Foreign Minister

On the last day of the UN Law of the Sea Conference in New York, 30 April 1982, we, the undersigned representatives of the political parties, spoke with the representatives of the Danish Delegation about the Rockall area and the rights we claim to the seabed south of Iceland's 200-mile economic zone. The meeting was held at the United Nations and lasted an hour and a half. Daniel Nolso, from the Faroe Islands, was the main spokesman for the Danish representatives. He spoke with great knowledge and brought along documents to support his case. His views and ours concerning the rights of Ireland and Britain in this area seem to be mainly the same, that is to say that Ireland's cause is the weakest of the four nations which claim rights to the seabed west of Rockall. Nolso feels that Britain's claim is the next weakest and that Denmark, on behalf of the Faroe Islands, is in the strongest position.

Iceland's arguments were studied thoroughly--the parliamentary resolutions, among other things, as well as an article in MORGUNBLADID written by Eyjolfur Konrad Jonsson. Daniel Nolso asked some questions and got some answers. An English translation of Jonsson's article was submitted to the Danish delegation. Earlier, Hans G. Andersen [Iceland's ambassador to the United States and chairman of the Icelandic delegation] had submitted the translation of this article to the Irish and the British delegations and requested their counter-arguments if there were any.

Ambassador Andersen, who had been tied up in a conciliatory meeting with the so-called Committee of Eleven, joined the meeting a little later. The main issues were then covered again and when it had become clear that the views and interests of the Faroe Islands agree quite well with the Althing resolutions, Ludvik Josefsson made a motion that a joint committee of Danes (Faroese) and Icelanders be established to examine the joint interests of the nations and view the matter thoroughly. This idea was well received, and it is our unanimous opinion that the Foreign Ministry should immediately initiate a followup of this motion based on repeated resolutions of the Althing. Even though we feel that the claim of Iceland and the Faroe Islands to the rights to the seabed west of Rockall is more valid than those of Ireland and Britain, we feel, however, that all work must be continued according to the resolutions of the Althing and discussions should be held with the Irish and British whenever requested, so that these four nations can come to an agreement, as severe disputes might result in none of them getting their demands satisfied and the area might be declared international. We would then have little or no say in any exploitation of the area, and, for example, in the future, we would be unable to prevent "geological disturbance" which might endanger life; furthermore, there is considerable possibility that oil and natural gas could be found in this area. It should also be taken into consideration that according to the Law of the Sea Treaty all living beings on the seabed which can move only by touching the seabed--that is to say all shellfish and crustacea--belong to the seabed, and there is little doubt that these resources will be found there for there are many spots in which the water is not very deep.

Reykjavik, 1 May 1982

This opinion is also shared by Benedikt Grondal, Ludvik Josefsson and Thorarinn Thorarinnsson.

It should be mentioned here that the Rockall Trough, which separates the Rockall Plateau from Scotland and Ireland, is the original rift from the time the Atlantic Ocean was beginning to be formed, 100 to 170 million years ago or earlier. It is almost 3,500 meters deep, which is 1,000 meters above the baseline referred to in Article 76 and, in our opinion, prevents any natural prolongation of Scotland or Ireland into the continental shelf west of Rockall. But it is stated at the beginning of Article 76 in the Law of the Sea Treaty that the prolongation must be continuous or unbroken from the territorial limit that is 12 miles, using the word "throughout" on which we, of course, placed special emphasis in our arguments with the Irish and the British.

Some people might say that there is no reason for us to claim an interest so far south in the ocean, but, nonetheless, I feel that the arguments I now have

stated to support our rights ought to suffice to convince people that it is unforgivable not to be on guard to maintain the nation's interests.

But the Third Law of the Sea Conference will not be remembered only for coastal states insuring that their rights and views on fishery conservation prevail in international law, whatever the implementation might turn out to be. The conference is perhaps most interesting because, without any significant conflict, it achieved success in adopting an all-encompassing legislation for about two-thirds to three-quarters of the earth's surface, and this was done without any voting taking place until the final vote. All the work was aimed toward total agreement between different views and interest groups, and I do not believe that such a great result has been obtained ever before in the history of the world. This conference is therefore a milestone and brings hope that in the future there will be greater success in international relations than there has been so far.

It was, of course, regretted that in the last days of the conference there was no success in reaching total unity, though it came very close. But many words had been said which it proved difficult to take back, and I am of the opinion that some or all of the states which voted against the treaty or abstained will review their positions, as this is an international treaty and an international development which is beyond all human power to stop.

I mentioned earlier the seabed rights to which Iceland is entitled and the resources which might be found both in and under the sea, as well as direct and indirect interests in the ocean surface, which, of course, will result from the exploitation of the seabed resources in times to come. But there are other rights closer to home which the Law of the Sea Treaty grants us beyond what we already have received. Article 66 of the Law of the Sea Treaty states that the states of origin of fish which spawn in fresh water, rivers and lakes have much more extensive rights and obligations to protect these fish stocks than any other fish stocks. States of origin can, for example, decide the total allowable catch and have extensive authority to prevent exploitation by others. I therefore think it is quite clear that it is a violation of the Law of the Sea Treaty for the Faroese to kill the Atlantic salmon as they have been doing--such behavior is unethical and violates Article 66 of the Law of the Sea Treaty. Actually, this article has for years remained unchanged in all drafts of the Law of the Sea Treaty and had thus become "de facto" law before the Faroese began their exploitation. Therefore, their behavior is even more serious.

We Icelanders would much rather help and support the Faroese than any other nation, and we want our relations to remain the best, but for us to be apathetic in this case, or to accept false arguments, such as that the Faroese have some right to use the so-called "trawl-net," is neither to their interest nor ours. What then about other species of fish which feed in Icelandic waters and are caught by other nations?

The Atlantic coastal states must take a firmer grip on these matters than has been done up to now, and in this respect the Law of the Sea Treaty is so clear that there is no doubt that when the states where the salmon stock originates stand united--that, is primarily, the Nordic countries, Ireland and Britain--

to guard their rights it will be possible to convince the Faroese that they are transgressing.

It is, of course, doubtful whether this matter should be mentioned along with our discussions and unity with the Faroese to guard joint seabed rights, but these matters will definitely be mentioned next time the fishing rights for the Faroese off Iceland are discussed. I am certainly expecting that during such friendly discussions an acceptable solution will be found. But the main task now is that Icelanders and the Faroese must delve into the issue concerning the seabed south of these countries and make necessary arrangements to insure their joint rights.

Of course it would be sensible to avoid conflict with the British and the Irish. I certainly feel that Althing has established a correct policy in this matter and that it should be pursued--that is, to try to reach an agreement among all four countries, preferably on the basis of joint sovereignty over and joint exploration and preservation of the Rockall area.

If the British and the Irish do not want to discuss these matters with us in all seriousness and negotiate, the only solution is for the Icelanders and the Faroese, or the Danes on their behalf, to make joint arrangements to insure their rights, and I believe the Danes and the Faroese have begun to realize that the Althing has given the Faroese full consideration in its resolutions. I therefore want to read a parliamentary resolution, "On Iceland's Rights to the Seabed and Cooperation with the Faroese," which was approved in the Althing 19 May 1980 as follows:

Based on the proposal passed in the Althing on 22 December 1978, the Althing resolves to authorize the government to follow up on claims about rights to the seabed south of Iceland's 200-mile economic zone, to the extent international law permits and as soon as possible, in order to initiate talks with other nations which have made claims in this area.

At the same time, any attempts made by the British and the Irish to claim rights west of the so-called Rockall Trough, outside their 200 miles, included in the Hatton Bank will be protested, since both geological facts and other arguments categorically contradict such claims and this is an area which Iceland and the Faroe Islands claim as theirs.

The Althing declares that in its opinion it is possible to solve matters concerning the sovereignty of Iceland and the Faroe Islands over this seabed area, either by joint sovereignty or division of the area.

The government is authorized to negotiate for a court of arbitration to decide the division of the area between Iceland and the Faroe Islands, if the Faroese so wish.

As the concluding words of the resolution show, it is up to the Faroese whether they want an arbitration court to decide on the division of the area between Iceland and the Faroe Islands, after we have jointly claimed our rights, and I feel that we are showing all possible fairness.

The truth is that the regulations in Article 76 of the Law of the Sea Treaty on the so-called "natural prolongation" of land throughout the seabed are extremely complex and difficult to understand, as the definition of the concept itself--"natural prolongation"--is missing, and therefore there is room for compromise similar to the one that set an example with the Jan Mayen agreement. We Icelanders must seek such compromise as it is not likely that the British or the Irish will do it. They plan to let an arbitration court decide on the division of the area between them--an area to which we feel that we and the Faroese have much more right. They are, of course, hoping that we will sit idly by in apathy and that time will work for them, as they guard their rights and strengthen them from year to year and the Icelanders and the Faroese sit idly by.

The law of the sea issues are so extensive that I have only been able to touch on a few of them in this short speech--and for example, I completely avoided mentioning the disputes that took place at the end of the Law of the Sea Conference--actually during the last two or three meetings--about the exploitation of the riches of the seabed in the open seas, and the so-called common human heritage. The fact is that I was so bored with those discussions and at times I felt they were too farfetched, that I cannot brag about being well versed about that phase of the law of the sea issues. Moreover, we, the Icelandic delegates, decided to only bring up subjects that could be conciliatory. As is well known, Hans G. Andersen sat on a conciliation committee of 11 people which was called "friends of the conference," and the work of this committee brought positive results, although the final goal of complete settlement was not obtained.

My time is up and I am willing to take questions from the audience.

Thank you.

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